

THE ACT OF READING CODEX ALEXANDRINUS:

TOWARD AN EXEGESIS

OF

MARK 1:21-28 AND PARALLELS

*Revised and Expanded*

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

This paper is a contemporary reading and analysis of Mark 1:21-28 and its parallels at Mark 14:53-72. From a methodological point of view, it employs the tools of a grammatical and narrative-critical method of exegesis. This paper exhibits a critical reading and analysis that is exclusive to Codex Alexandrinus.<sup>1</sup> To this extent it elucidates and exhibits features that are unique to the codex, both in terms of the text itself as well as concomitant conclusions. With respect to the *nomina sacra*—which appear copiously upon every page of the codex, and which without exception impinge upon issues related to hermeneutics and methodology—all insights gained from their appearance in this analysis are by no means limited to Codex Alexandrinus. Rather, all insights gleaned from the presence of *nomina sacra* in this analysis can be compared against any uncial manuscript within which they appear.

*Nomina sacra* can be likened to hinges upon which the pages of manuscripts turn or do not turn. Consequently, it is difficult to begin an exegesis of the codex without first discussing *nomina sacra* in contemporary biblical scholarship and in particular the work of the Paleontologist Ludwig Traube.<sup>2</sup> His historical investigation into the origin, the forms, and the widespread use of the *nomina sacra* was a milestone in biblical scholarship. It is all the more unfortunate, therefore, that since the publication of Traube's book, scholars have been reluctant to take up his cause.<sup>3</sup> Even for those biblical

<sup>1</sup> View Codex Alexandrinus online at: [http://www.bl.uk/manuscripts/FullDisplay.aspx?ref=Royal\\_MS\\_1\\_d\\_viii](http://www.bl.uk/manuscripts/FullDisplay.aspx?ref=Royal_MS_1_d_viii).

<sup>2</sup> Ludwig Traube, *Nomina Sacra: Versuch einer Geschichte der christlichen Kürzung* (München: C.H. Becksche), 1907.

<sup>3</sup> Flavio Bedodi, "I 'Nomina Sacra' nei papiri greci veterotestamentari precristiani," *Studia Papyrologica* 13 (1974): pp. 89-103; Tomas Bokedal, *The Formation and Significance of the Christian Biblical Canon: A Study in Text, Ritual and Interpretation* (London: Bloomsbury, 2014), pp. 93-100; Schuyler Brown, "Concerning the Origin of the Nomina Sacra," *Studia Papyrologica* 9 (1970): pp. 7-19; Jose O'Callaghan, *Nomina Sacra in Papyrus Graecis Saeculi III Neotestamentariis* (Rome: Biblical Institute Press, 1970); Howard, "The Tetragram and the New Testament"; Larry Hurtado, "The Origin of the Nomina Sacra: A Proposal," *JBL* 117 (1998): pp. 665-73; idem., *The Earliest Christian Artifacts: Manuscripts and Christian Origins* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans), 2006; idem., *Identity and Interaction in the Ancient Mediterranean. Jews, Christians and Others: Essays in Honour of Stephen G. Wilson*, eds. Zeba A Cook and Philip A. Harland (Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix Press, 2007), pp. 149-63; Jankowski, "'Nomina Sacra' nei papiri dei LXX (secoli II e III d. C.)," *Studia Papyrologica* 16 (1977): pp. 81-116; E. Nachmanson, "Die Schriftliche Kontraktion auf griechischen Inschriften" *Eranos* 10 (1910), pp. 101-44; A. H. R. E. Paap, *Nomina Sacra in the Greek Papyri of the First Five Centuries A.D.: The Sources and Some Deductions* (Leiden: Brill, 1959); Colin H. Roberts, *Manuscript, Society and Belief in Early Christian Egypt* (London: Oxford University Press, 1979), pp. 26-48; Gunnar Rudberg, *Nuetestamentlicher Text und Nomina sacra* (Uppsala: A.B. Akademiska Bokhandeln, 1915); Kurt Treu, "Die Bedeutung des Griechischen für die Juden im römischen Reich," *Kairos* NF15 (1973): pp. 123-44 (English translation online at

scholars who did take up Traube's challenge, most of their work was influenced by his palaeographic methodology, which sought to understand the origins, the forms, the and processes of writing *nomina sacra*, but not the textual content within which those same forms and processes were found (i.e., biblical narrative). Questions regarding a specialized grammar, rhetorical function, and narrative competency (all of which are essential to understanding the *nomina sacra*) remained unanswered. This seeming oversight no doubt came about because of a preference for text-critical editions of the Bible which do not include *nomina sacra*.<sup>4</sup> This, in turn, threw a veil over the uncial manuscripts within which the *nomina sacra* are only ever seen. Nonetheless, since most of the critical scholarship has focused on origins, I will only briefly cover what is most important in this regard, and then move on to an exegetical analysis of Mark 1:21-28 and parallels using Codex Alexandrinus as my primary text.

## 2. A BRIEF SURVEY ON THE ORIGINS OF THE *NOMINA SACRA*

To begin, at the most basic level *nomina sacra* are best understood as skeletal nouns,<sup>5</sup> which includes proper nouns (e.g.,  $\overline{\Theta\varsigma}$  “G-d,”  $\overline{\Lambda\Nu\omicron\varsigma}$ , “M-n”),<sup>6</sup> nouns of place (e.g.,  $\overline{\text{I}\text{H}\text{A}}$  “Isr--l”) and nouns of things (e.g.,  $\overline{\text{P}\text{N}\text{A}}$  “Sp-r-t”). This is the most widespread and most basic understanding regarding the *nomina sacra* that appear in the Greek uncial manuscripts of the Bible.<sup>7</sup> The most obvious feature that signals the appearance of a *nomen sacrum* is (1) a horizontal bar placed atop a series of re-occurring letters within (b) an uncial manuscript. The letters, which are always uncial, can be consonants, vowels, or

<http://eawc.evansville.edu/essays/nepage.htm>); Trobisch, *Die Endredaktion des Neuen Testaments: Eine Untersuchung zur Entstehung der christlichen Bible* (Friburg: Universitätsverlag Freiburg und Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1996); C.M. Tuckett, “‘*Nomina Sacra*’: Yes and No?,” in *The Biblical Canons* (BETL 163), eds., J.M. Auwers and H.J. De Jonge (Leuven: Leuven University Press/Peeters, 2003), pp. 431-58.

<sup>4</sup> The Nestle-Aland, *Novum Testamentum Graece* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1983) and the United Bible Society's, *The Greek New Testament* (New York: American Bible Society, 1975) are printed using miniscule font and do not contain any *nomina sacra*, even though to the best of my knowledge every manuscript—including the papyri—include *nomina sacra*.

<sup>5</sup> In German, “wortskelette,” Traube, p. 47.

<sup>6</sup> Uncial font used in this paper is a courtesy of The Greek Font Society (<http://www.greekfontociety.gr>).

<sup>7</sup> It is true that *nomina sacra* are found in abundance among the earliest Papyri fragments and other ancient artifacts, but, by default, papyri fragments rarely contain entire columns, much less entire books, and none contain the entire Bible. The lack of a papyri codices containing full columns and whole books impedes any narrative analysis of their *nomina sacra*. From a methodological perspective, all *nomina sacra* are narrative devices and therefore assume a full narrative. Consequently, papyri fragments are by their nature limited to palaeontological concerns. This is why I have placed the papyri outside my own analysis because their fragmentary nature limits their value as a methodological tool.

some combination thereof. Typically, when the bar is placed over a grouping of letters, the effect is one of contraction and suppression; contraction, because usually only the first and last letters are visible to the reader, and suppression, because all remaining letters are suppressed or hidden beneath the horizontal bar. The rhetorical effect is the creation of skeletal nouns, both singular and plural. Moreover, this horizontal bar can be placed over individual letters to form numerals, or it can be tethered to the beginning or end of lines where it hangs over mere absence. If the horizontal bar is tethered to the end of a line, it has the power to generate a hidden *nu*.<sup>8</sup> In this latter case the effect is paradoxical in nature, both revealing and concealing a letter that forever remains unseen to the reader. The most important feature to note, however, is that it is the horizontal line placed above the letters that bestows the surplus of meaning, in some cases even exercising a seemingly magical effect within the manuscript. In every occurrence, no matter if the horizontal line is used to conjure a letter, elicit a numerical value, or generate a proper noun, it is the horizontal line that holds the grammatical and syntactical power. In other words, if no horizontal stroke is tendered, then neither is there any *nomina sacra* to discuss.

From an historical point of view, it's worth asking if there be any specialized terminology within antiquity that addresses this peculiar stroke? The answer is "yes." The classical Greek philosophers offer up the notion of ἡ γραμμή (from γράφω) meaning both "a stroke of the pen" as well as "the sacred line" (ἡ γραμμή ἔιρα), which, when deployed demarcates both a beginning and an end of what is both sacred and divine.<sup>9</sup> Though an elusive idea, the concept of a sacred line among the classical Greek philosophers hints at a hidden link to the *nomina sacra* that is outside of the Jewish/Christian matrix.

Ludwig Traube, however, argued for the exact opposite. He maintained that all the *nomina sacra* could be traced back to Greek translations of the Hebrew Bible by Jewish scribes during the Hellenistic Era (323 BC – 31 CE).<sup>10</sup> The widespread practice of Jewish scribes rendering the Tetragram silent by

<sup>8</sup> This seems to be the original meaning of νὺ ἔφελκυστίκον, or "the *nu* dragged along," Henry Thackeray, *A Grammar of the Old Testament in Greek*, Vol. 1 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1909), p. 134. It is my opinion that this phrase came about on account of its use in the manuscripts at the end of a line.

<sup>9</sup> See "ἔρις" and "γραμμή" in *A Greek-English Lexicon, Seventh Ed.*, eds. G.H. Little and R. Scott (New York: 1883), pp. 316, 696. Cf. Theocritus, "τὸν ἀπὸ γραμμῆς κινεῖν λίθον," *Idylls*, §6.18 in *Bucolicorum Graecorum Theocriti Bionis Moschi Reliquiae Accedentibus Incertorum Idylliis*, second edition, ed. by Henricus Ludolfus Ahrens (Leipzig: 1884), p. 25. Cf. Plato's remarks concerning the κολοφώνα as an end-point in *Euthydemus* §301e, ed. John Burnet (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1903); and, curiously, Alexander Negrus, *A Dictionary of Modern Greek Proverbs, with an English Translation, Explanatory Remarks, and Philological Illustrations* (Edinburgh: Thomas Clark, 1831), p. 131.

<sup>10</sup> Traube, pp. 19-44.

reading אֲדֹנָי (Lord) for יְהוָה (Yahweh) is, of course, well documented in ancient literature.<sup>11</sup> Jewish scribes, to be sure, used a variety of means to remove the pronunciation of the divine name.<sup>12</sup> Traube reasoned that, during the process of translating from Hebrew to Greek, Jewish scribes “created” *nomina sacra* as a means of preserving their own scribal tradition, while at the same time adding to it.<sup>13</sup> In other words, he argued that Jewish scribes would have maintained their own tradition by placing the *nomen sacrum* ΚΓ (L-rd) for the Hebrew Tetragram יְהוָה (Yahweh). This line of reasoning is Traube's rationale for connecting the Hebrew Tetragram with the Greek *Nomina Sacra*.<sup>14</sup>

There are problems, however, with Traube's hypothesis. While it is true that Hellenistic Jews attributed to יְהוָה sacred and even magical values, one must keep in mind that יְהוָה is only one among several names in the Hebrew Bible. Yet יְהוָה was always the only name that was invested with silence. This is in direct contrast to the history of *nomina sacra* which, from earliest times, always appeared as a plurality. This is an important point to consider. The Judaic tradition always only had one “*nomen sacrum*”—the Tetragram, whereas, even in the pre-Christian Greek scriptures (i.e., the Septuagint) there was always a plurality of *nomina sacra*. No Greek manuscript of the Torah has ever been discovered where the only *nomen sacrum* employed is ΚΓ. It is precisely this conundrum between the singularity of the Tetragram and the plurality of the *nomina sacra* that caused Traube to concede a “wavering” in his own hypothesis regarding the origins of *nomina sacra*.<sup>15</sup> In order to get beyond this conceptual and historical impasse, Traube was compelled to postulate the

<sup>11</sup> For example, Philo, *Vit. Moses* 2.114, 205 and Josephus, *Antiquities*, 2 §275; Hurtado draws attention to Leviticus 24:16, stating, “The ancient Jewish reverence for the name is reflected in the LXX translation of Lev. 24:16, which in Hebrew forbids ‘blaspheming the name of Yahweh,’ but in the LXX invokes death on one who ‘pronounces the name of the Lord,’” *The Origin of the Nomina Sacra*, p. 661, n. 16; See also M. Delcor, “Des diverses manières d’écrire le tétragramme sacré dans les anciens documents hébraïques,” *RHR* 147 (1955), pp. 145-73; J. Z. Lauterbach, “Substitutes for the Tetragrammaton,” *PAAJR* (1930-31), pp. 39-67. J.P. Siegel, “The Employment of Paleo-Hebrew Characters for the Divine Names at Qumran in the Light of Tannaitic Sources,” *HUCA* 42 (1971) 159-72; George Howard, “The Tetragram and the New Testament,” *JBL* 96 (1977), pp. 63-68.

<sup>12</sup> Hurtado, *The Origin of the Nomina Sacra*, p. 662; see also Emmanuel Tov, *Textual Criticism of the Hebrew Bible* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1992), p. 216, 220; P. W. Skehan, E. Ulrich, J.E. Sanderson, P.J. Parsons, *Qumran Cave 4: IV, Paleo-Hebrew and Greek Biblical Manuscripts* (DJD 9; Oxford: Clarendon, 1992), pp. 168-69; G. A. Deissmann, “Greek Transcriptions of the Tetragrammaton,” in *Bible Studies* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1901), pp. 321-36; P. J. Parsons, J. R. Rea, E. G. Turner, eds., *The Oxyrhynchus Papyri*, Vol. 50 (London: British Academy, 1983), pp. 1-3. This scribal practice was not simply the removal of the pronunciation of the Tetragram, it also involved the (re)naming of the Tetragram through the radical imposition of meaning upon specific Hebrew characters.

<sup>13</sup> Traube, p. 32.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid., pp. 27-30.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid., p. 31.

unthinkable—that in the very earliest translation processes Jewish scribes acted *contrary to tradition*, and substituted the *nomen sacrum*  $\overline{\Theta\zeta}$  (G-d) for the Hebrew יהוה (Yahweh) instead of  $\overline{\kappa\rho}$  (L-rd). This, of course, is not only implausible, but is, in fact, untenable.<sup>16</sup>

That being said, there is a clear affinity in form and function between the Hebraic Tetragram and the Greek *nomina sacra*, but any analysis that limits itself to a strictly Jewish/Christian matrix is inevitably building upon a premise of impediment. This is why in more recent research scholars have sought explanations for *nomina sacra* within a larger Greco-Roman and ancient Near Eastern context (i.e., outside a strictly Jewish/Christian matrix).<sup>17</sup> Yet, despite these new trajectories in research, scholars still focus upon origins (i.e., upon forms and the processes that gave rise to the forms), all the while ignoring the *context* and *setting* in which *nomina sacra* are found. I know of no monograph that has yet pursued an analysis of the rhetoric of *nomina sacra* within biblical narrative.

### 3. NARRATIVE COMPETENCE AND NOMINA SACRA

As mentioned above, all the *nomina sacra* are likened skeletal nouns couched within larger syntactical units. Within the columns of biblical manuscripts, however, they function as narrative devices. They occupy a unique relationship to all the surrounding text. The *nomina sacra* are a part of the larger narrative, engaging characters, events, and settings, all of which work together as a whole. But since the *nomina sacra* are for the most part only ever seen within uncial manuscripts, they presume a specific type of manuscript competence beyond what one might expect from an English translation of the Bible. This fact is what demarcates all the uncial manuscripts (and even the papyri), from eclectic

<sup>16</sup> One further point worth noting is Traube's quotation of Origen Adamantius regarding the Tetragram, who writes: “Ἑβραίοις χαρακτηῖται καὶ τὸ ὄνομα, Ἑβραίοις δὲ οὐ τοῖς νῦν, ἀλλὰ τοῖς ἀρχαιοτάτοις” (p. 27). Given Traube's genius, it is not surprising that he would include Origen's remarks for two reasons: (a) for Origen's choice of words, and (b) for attributing the practice of “cutting short” the enunciation of the divine name to the ἀρχαιοτάτοις. In the first instance, it is remarkable that Origen (b. 184 CE – d. 253 CE), supposedly being so close to the advent of Christianity and a reader of the Greek Bible, would use the word Ἑβραίοις to describe his contemporaries instead of Ἰουδαίους. In other words, Origen's choice of vocabulary is *alien* and *anachronous* to someone of his time and calibre; unless, of course, he is implicitly drawing a line of distinction between these two ethnic groups that is both historical and biblical in nature. In the second instance, by attributing the origin of “cutting short” the Tetragram to the ἀρχαιοτάτοις, Origen clearly does not attribute its origin to Hellenistic Jewish scribes, but rather intentionally attributes its origin to ancient Hebrews far outside of his own time as well as that of his (Jewish?) contemporaries.

<sup>17</sup> Alan Millard, “Ancient Abbreviations and the *Nomina Sacra*,” in *The Unbroken Reed: Studies in the Culture and Heritage of Ancient Egypt in Honour of A. F. Shore*, ed. C. Eyre, A. Leahy, and L. M. Leahy (London: Egypt Exploration Society, 1994), pp. 221-226; E. Nachmanson, “Die Shcriftliche Kontraktion auf griechischen Inschriften,” pp. 101-44.



versions of the Bible such the Nestle Aland or UBS Greek New Testaments.<sup>18</sup> Nonetheless, since this paper speaks of a narrative competency, one must appropriate a measure of theory and terminology that helps one get beyond strict palaeontological and historical models of analysis. It is necessary, therefore, to briefly outline a narrative-critical theory that is amicable to the *nomina sacra*. Because, historical methods of exegesis (including textual criticism) produced nothing of value with respect to *nomina sacra*; rather the effect has been one of the exact opposite.

A fundamental premise to narrative-criticism is that reading and interpretation are dialogical in nature.<sup>19</sup> When someone reads a narrative, he or she is intimately involved in the production of meaning on many levels. I can think of no better an example of this than the *nomina sacra*, because, left alone on the page, they remain meaningless and inarticulate. Its not just the reader, though, who defines the text nor the meaning of a text, but also the reading community, i.e., those who read the same or similar texts. As Robert Fowler has noted:

Granted that the community defines what the text is and tells the reader how to go about reading [it]—at the same time the text (as defined by the community) molds the reader and constrains the critical gaze of the community, and, at the same time the reader (as instructed by the community) construes the text [in new and meaningful ways] and [thus] contributes to the evolution of the critical community.<sup>20</sup>

So, in any critical reading, a whole system of interpretive experience is brought to the text, which includes both the individual reader and the reading community.

For a critical reader, the uncial manuscripts assume a specific reading *persona*. This is without dispute. Uncial manuscripts “make certain assumptions about the reader's beliefs, knowledge, and [one's] familiarity with

<sup>18</sup> An important exception are the pseudo-facsimiles of uncial manuscripts printed in the 19<sup>th</sup> century; i.e., *Bibliorum Sacrorum: Graecus Codex Vaticanus*, Vols. 1-6, Caroli Vercellone Sodalit Barnabitaie and Iosephi Cozza Monachi Basiliani eds., (Rome: 1868), and Constantine von Tischendorf, *Bibliorum Codex Sinaiticus Petropolitanus*, Vols. 1-4: *Auspiciis augustissimis imperatoris Alexandri II. ex tenebris protraxit in Europam transtulit ad iuvandas atque illustrandas sacras litteras edidit* (Petropoli: 1862).

<sup>19</sup> George W. Young, *Subversive Symmetry: Exploring the Fantastic in Mark 6:45-56* (Leiden: Brill, 2000), pp. 24-46.

<sup>20</sup> Robert Fowler, “Who Is the 'Reader' of Mark's Gospel?,” (SBL: 1983 Seminar Papers): p. 45. It is important to keep at the fore of one's mind that one's own reading community may not be Robert Fowler's reading community. One's reading community may not even be Christian, Muslim, or Jewish. One's reading community may not even be contemporaneous with contemporary biblical scholarship, even though he or she is familiar with it.

[manuscript] conventions.”<sup>21</sup> Just like any other narrative, biblical manuscripts assume a *persona* that “possesses a particular knowledge and literary competence developed by the text.”<sup>22</sup> Furthermore, as Paul Danove points out, any readerly competency includes a knowledge of “literary forms, sensitivity to rhetorical strategies, and facility in the syntactic and semantic manipulations of language.”<sup>23</sup> No reader knows all the linguistic or rhetorical strategies a narrative may assume of its “ideal reader,” but so long as a text has a reader, he or she will grow in narrative competency in concert with a reading community.

#### 4. MARK 1:21-28: CODEX ALEXANDRINUS

ΚΑΙ ΕΙΣΠΟΡΕΥΟΝΤΑΙ

IB ΕΙΣΚΑΠΕΡΝΑΟΥΜ ΚΑΙ ΕΥΘΕΩΣ ΤΟΙΣ  
 H CΑΒΒΑΣΙΝ ΕΙΣ ΕΛΘΩΝ ΕΙΣ ΤΗΝ ΣΥΝΑ  
 ΓΩΓΗΝ ΕΔΙΔΑΣΚΕΝ ΚΑΙ ΕΞΕΠΛΗΣ  
 IF ΟΝΤΟ ΕΠΙ ΤΗ ΔΙΔΑΧΗ ΑΥΤΟΥ ΗΝ ΓΑΡ  
 B ΔΙΔΑΣΚΩΝ ΑΥΤΟΥΣ ΩΣ ΕΞΟΥΣΙΑΝ  
 ΕΧΩΝ ΚΑΙ ΟΥΧ ΩΣ ΟΙ ΓΡΑΜΜΑΤΕΙΣ  
 IA ΚΑΙ ΗΝ ΕΝ ΤΗΣ ΣΥΝΑΓΩΓΗΣ ΑΥΤΩΝ ΑΝΘΡΩ  
 H ΕΝ ΠΝΙΝ ΚΑΘΑΡΤΩ ΚΑΙ ΑΝΕΚΡΑΖΕ  
 ΛΕΓΩΝ ΔΙΑ ΤΗΝ ΜΕΙΝ ΚΑΙ ΣΥΓΓΝΑΖΑ  
 ΡΗΝ ΕΝ ΘΕΟΙΣ ΑΠΟΛΕΣΑΙΝ ΜΑΣ ΟΙ ΔΑΔΕ  
 ΤΙΣ ΕΙΘΑΓΙΟΣ ΤΟΥ ΘΥ ΚΑΙ ΕΠΙ ΤΕΙ ΜΗ  
 ΣΕΝ ΑΥΤΩ ΟΙΣ ΛΕΓΩΝ ΦΕΙΜΩΘΗΤ ΚΑΙ ΕΞ  
 ΗΛΘΕ ΕΞ ΑΥΤΟΥ ΚΑΙ ΣΠΑΡΑΞΑΝ ΑΥΤΟ  
 ΤΟ ΠΝΕΥΜΑ ΤΟ ΑΚΑΘΑΡΤΟΝ ΚΑΙ ΚΡΑ  
 ΖΑΝ ΦΩΝΗ ΜΕΓΑΛΗ ΕΞΗΛΘΕΝ ΕΞ  
 ΑΥΤΟΥ ΚΑΙ ΕΘΑΜΒΗΘΗ ΣΑΝ ΑΠΑΝΤΕΣ  
 ΩΣΤΕ ΣΥΝΖΗΤΕΙΝ ΠΡΟΣ ΑΥΤΟΥΣ  
 ΛΕΓΟΝΤΕΣ ΤΙ ΕΣΤΙΝ ΤΟΥΤΟ ΤΙΣ Η ΚΑΙ  
 ΗΝ ΑΥΤΗ ΔΙΔΑΧΗ ΟΤΙ ΚΑΤΕΞΟΥΣΙΑΝ  
 ΚΑΙ ΤΟΙΣ ΠΝΕΥΜΑΤΙΝ ΤΟΙΣ ΑΚΑΘΑΡ  
 ΤΟΙΣ ΕΠΙ ΤΑΙΣ ΣΕΙ ΚΑΙ ΥΠΑΚΟΥΟΥΣΙ  
 ΑΥΤΩ ΕΞΗΛΘΕΝ ΔΕ Η ΑΚΟΗ ΑΥΤΟΥ  
 ΕΥΘΥΣ ΕΙΣΟΛΗΝ ΤΗΝ ΠΕΡΙΧΩΡΟ  
 ΤΗΣ ΓΑΛΙΛΑΙΑΣ

<sup>21</sup> Peter Rabinowitz, “Truth in Fiction,” *Critical Inquiry* (1974): p. 126.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid., p. 127.

<sup>23</sup> Paul Danove, “A Method for Analyzing Narrative Communication,” in *The End of Mark's Story: A Methodological Study* (Leiden: 1993): p. 68. For an excellent discussion of the various models of narrative communication see pp. 55-75.

#### 4.1. Critical Observations and Analysis

There are a number of inaugural features presented to the reader in this passage: the *nomen sacrum* **ΑΝΘΝ**, for example, appears here for the first time, as well as Capernaoum, synagogue, a teaching, the idea of an unclean spirit, the notion of an exorcism, and the inception of a rumour, to name but a few. This episode occupies a secondary position in the Gospel narrative, being preceded by the Baptism of John and, more importantly the vision of the tearing of the heavens (Mk. 1:10; cf. Mk. 14:63). This latter event precedes and forms the backdrop to Mark 1:21-28 and parallels (14:53-72). It is also pivotal insofar as it sets in motion the much larger plot of the Gospel itself and is the premise for this episode.

To be sure, it begins with the reader being pulled by the narrator through a threefold division of boundaries: (a) he/she enters Capernaoum, and then (b) he/she enters the Sabbaths, and then (c) he/she enters their synagogue (Mk. 1:21). The narrative in this way identifies three types of boundaries: those that are (a) political, (b) those that are cultural, and lastly (c) those that are religious in nature. The identification of boundaries is crucial, because it lays the foundation for defining what is lawful and unlawful, acceptable and unacceptable, and, more to the point, what is clean versus unclean. In this way the narrative world creates various types of acceptable and unacceptable behaviours for its characters, and this rhetoric is reinforced by a plurality of borders and boundaries. For in any society, culturally imposed norms vary from one context to another, and sometimes may even straddle one or more boundaries. Within each boundary characters are defined by the extent of its domain and the limits of its influence. Thus, what might be clean within a political boundary, might be deemed unclean within a religious boundary. From within each boundary emerges a line of demarcation, a sacred line, that establishes the clean/unclean dichotomy, and thus the premise for the possibility of an exorcism. If there be no sacred line, then no exorcism of any kind can occur, no matter if it be political, cultural, or religious in nature.

There is a total of five *nomina sacra* throughout this episode: **ΑΝΘΝ**, **ΠΝΙ**, **ΙΥ**, **ΘΥ**, and **ΙC**.<sup>24</sup> As mentioned previously, this is the first time the *nomen sacrum* **ΑΝΘΝ** appears. It appears here first, and, more to the point, in *their* synagogue (i.e., not *his* synagogue). Here both the form and the content of the narrative merge. A rhetoric of *form* suggests that the appearance of the *nomen sacrum* **ΑΝΘΝ** is the sign and the signal to the reader of an unclean spirit. The dramatic irony at this point is hard to miss. Does the *nomen sacrum* **ΑΝΘΝ** by default have an unclean spirit or must the *nomen sacrum* **ΑΝΘΝ** first be in *their* synagogue? The possessive pronoun in the phrase “*their* synagogue” is key, for it implies that a *perceived* boundary has been crossed.

<sup>24</sup> For a comprehensive discussion of these forms, see Traube, *Nomina Sacra*, pp. 88-96, 101-103, 113-116.

Whether the boundary is legitimate or not is open to question. One would have to consider the self perception of those who make up the synagogue. In any case, the juxtaposition of the sacred and the profane is highly rhetorical. Interesting enough, Dirk Jongkind, in his own analysis of *nomina sacra* asks, “Did the use of a *nomen sacrum* [ever] amount to an interpretation of the text?”<sup>25</sup> The answer, of course, is always in the affirmative. To be sure, it is best to keep in mind that the reader’s voice is the voice of every character and every *persona* in the narrative—except for those cases where the reader chooses *not* to enunciate the *nomina sacra*. Therefore, only a preconceived notion of what the manuscript *cannot* say or convey might cause one to dismiss out-of-hand the *nomen sacrum* as a narrative device. But even if a reader manages to overcome the rhetorical obstacle posed by **ΑΝΘΝ**, he or she should guard against being impaled by the next, for in Codex Alexandrinus the reader is introduced to *nomina sacra* that teach with authority. Indeed, they are not like the *γράμματα*, neither in form nor in function. *Nomina sacra* function as narrative devices first, only in a secondary sense can they be perceived as letters or words. As narrative devices they can bind the tongue, stopple the ears, or veil the eyes, in as much as they can loose the tongue, unstop the ears, and open the eyes. The power, of course, resides with the competent reader who can choose either to enunciate them or not to enunciate them. If left un-enunciated, then the reader creates lacunae in the text (i.e., moments of inaudibility) invested with secrecy.

In any event, the *nomina sacra* in this episode are endowed with an unabashed mix of the sacred and the profane. It is precisely because **ΑΝΘΝ** is joined with the *nomen sacrum* **ΠΝΙ** that it is declared unclean by the narrator. **ΑΝΘΝ** has **ΠΝΙ** and henceforth both are unclean. Once again, form and content, meaning and message, merge in this episode. When this same **ΑΝΘΝ** “cries out” (Mk. 1:24), we see two more *nomina sacra*, **ΙΥ** and **ΘΥ** on the lips of the unclean. Is it possible or permissible for an unclean spirit to utter these *nomina sacra*, or is it better for them to remain un-enunciated? The sheer abundance of *nomina sacra* in this passage test the idea of boundaries, and especially those boundaries that define what is clean and unclean.<sup>26</sup>

The content of the cry is important: **ΑΝΘΝ** cries out, “AIA! What is

<sup>25</sup> Dirk Jongkind, *Scribal Habits of Codex Sinaiticus: Texts and Studies, Third Series* Vol. 5 (Piscataway: Gorgias Press, 2007), p. 61; See also “*Nomina Sacra*, Ligatures, Itacisms, Text-Divisions,” pp. 61-129.

<sup>26</sup> It is important to distinguish between an unclean spirit as something created by culturally imposed norms and values, and a demon (δαίμόνιον). From a strictly etymological point of view, a demon is anything that exhibits divine or god-like attributes, but which is *not* a deity. A demon can be something (or even someone) to which divine attributes are *attributed*, but which is divine. One can assign, for example, the term “demonic” to *objects* and *artifacts* exhibiting or conveying divine-like attributes, but which in and of themselves lack the fullness of the deity. For a fuller discussion see “Δαίμόνιον,” H. G. Liddell and R. Scott, *A Greek-English Lexicon*, pp. 305-6.

in us and you, **ΙΥ** Nazarene? Have you come to destroy us? We have known you, who you are, the holy one of **ΘΥ**” (Mk. 1:24). The cry begins with the question, “What is in us and you?” Now, a fundamental premise to any narrative is that it is always self-referential. One is compelled, therefore, to pose this same question, albeit in a vehemently self-referential manner: “What is in **HMEIN** and **CY**?” In this way, one looks first to the text for an answer to any question it poses regarding itself. The most basic response to this question is letters—black letters surrounded by a white background. But if we can advance beyond the mundane, then we will surely encounter a *misspelling* in the pronouns for “us” and “you” that leads us beyond issues of mere orthography.<sup>27</sup> In the first instance, the word for “us,” **HMEIN** (dative plural), should be written ἡμῖν, and the word for “you,” **CY** (dative singular), should be written σοί. For the competent reader, the misspelling can only be deliberate, because the narrative itself not only acknowledges the misspelling, but deliberately calls the reader’s attention to it.<sup>28</sup> This type of rhetoric is unique. There are references, however, to a similar rhetoric among the ancient Greek writers. Recall, for example, the letter-bearers mentioned by Theopompus (*circa*. 390 BCE). “The Lacedaemonians,” writes Theopompus, “bore **Λ** upon their shields, and the Messenians, the letter **Μ**. These [letters] flash like lightning [in the text] and are intended to terrorize [the reader].”<sup>29</sup> In a similar fashion, we see that **HMEIN** is bearing the letter **Ε**, and that **CY** is holding out the letter **Υ**, albeit in an extreme form of grammatical defiance. Such acts of defiance demand etymological scrutiny.

<sup>27</sup> These so-called “itacisms”—the substitution of **ΕΙ** for **Ι**—appear copiously in the manuscripts, including Codex Alexandrinus, Codex Sinaiticus, and Codex Vaticanus. For a dissenting discussion of the substitution of **ΕΙ** for **Ι**, see C.C. Caragounis, *The Development of Greek and the New Testament* (Tubingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2004), pp. 492, 500-501; Dirk Jongkind, *Scribal Habits of Codex Sinaiticus*, pp. 90-94.

<sup>28</sup> It is unfortunate that this type of rhetoric seems to have completely eluded biblical textual critics. Neither the Nestle Aland nor the UBS Greek New Testaments mention anything with respect to misspellings at Mk. 1:24. I can only surmise, therefore, that the misspelling at Mk. 1:24 catches the textual critics in their own cunning.

<sup>29</sup> Photius Lex: Λαμβδα ἐπὶ ταῖς ἀσπισίν οἱ Λακεδαιμόνιοι ἐπεγράφων, ὥσπερ οἱ Μεσσηνιοὶ Μ Εὐπολῖς. Ἐξεπλάγη γὰρ ἰδὼν στίλβοντα τὰ λάμβδα. Οὕτως καὶ Θεόπομπος, Theopompi fragmenta, § 325 in *Fragmenta Historicorum Græcorum*, Vol. 1, ed., Ambrosio Firmin Didot (Paris: Institutii Regii Franciæ: 1841), p. 330. Here, οἱ Λακεδαιμόνιοι literally means “the lucky demons” and οἱ Μεσσηνιοὶ “the Messianic Ones.” See also H. G. Liddell and R. Scott, “Λ” in *A Greek-English Lexicon*, p. 821. Cf. the grammatical view of reality in Empedocles and the Orphic poets who refer to their countrymen as “colophons”—i.e., the final stroke or signature at the end of a manuscript; Edwin Arnold, *The Poets of Greece* (London: Cassel, Petter, and Galpin, 1869), pp. 160-62.

In the first instance, the ancient Greeks originally did not call the letter **Ε** “ἔψιλόν,” but rather they called the letter **Ε** “εἰ.”<sup>30</sup> This is exactly what one sees in the plural dative pronoun **ΗΜΕΙΝ**, but is what one does not hear in the dative plural ἡμῖν.<sup>31</sup> In the second case, the reader does not see nor hear the dative singular σοί, but rather only hears the long vowel οῦ (genitive singular). Once again, originally the ancient Greeks called the letter ὀμικρον, “οῦ,”<sup>32</sup> or in uncial script “ΟΥ.” This is almost what one sees in the pronoun “**ΕΥ**,” but it is exactly what one hears in the long vowel “**Υ**” written “οῦ,” as in ὑψιλόν. Moreover, once the letters εἰ and οῦ were attached as prefixes to ψιλόν, they were, ironically, no longer naked (ψιλόν means “to be naked”), because their etymological root which included both what one sees and what one hears was thereafter concealed—except, of course, for these instances found within the scripture where the narrative calls one's attention to it.<sup>33</sup> Thus, the narrative rhetoric at Mk. 1:24 is a blending of what is both seen and heard as well as what is written and spoken, essentially a blending and merging of γραφή and ῥημα.<sup>34</sup>

If what is argued above be genuine, and if one corrects the misspelling in both pronouns, extracting the **Ε** and **Υ**, then the reader is left with a surplus of two letters.<sup>35</sup> If one places them like this “**ΕΥ**,” then reader has the name of Adam's γυνή (Gen. 4:1), whose name also stands as a prefix to the word “Gospel,” i.e., εὐ-αγγέλιον.<sup>36</sup> On the other hand, if the reader turns them

<sup>30</sup> Plato explains: ἀλλὰ γὰρ δῆλον ὅτι ἔσεις βούλεται εἶναι· οὐ γὰρ ἦτα ἐχρώμεθα ἀλλὰ εἶ τὸ παλαιόν. ἡ δὲ ἀρχὴ ἀπὸ τοῦ κίειν· ξενικὸν δὲ τοῦνομα· τοῦτο δ' ἐστὶν ἰέναι. εἰ οὖν τις τὸ παλαιὸν ἀντὶς εἶροι ὄνομα εἰς τὴν ἐμετέραν φωνὴν συμβαῖνον, ἰέσις ἂν ὀρθῶς καλοῖτο, “Cratylus Theaetetus,” §§426c, 437b in *Bibliotheca Scriptorum Graecorum et Romanorum Teubneriana*, eds. C.FR. Hermann – M. Wohlrab (Leipzig: Aedibus B. G. Teubneri, 1902).

<sup>31</sup> H. G. Liddell and R. Scott, “E” in *A Greek-English Lexicon*, p. 385.

<sup>32</sup> Plato, “Cratylus Theaetetus,” §416b-c, in *Bibliotheca Scriptorum Graecorum et Romanorum Teubneriana*, eds. C. FR. Hermann – M. Wohlrab (Leipzig: Aedibus B. G. Teubneri, 1902); “O,” Little and Scott, eds., *A Greek-English Lexicon*, pp. 995-6.

<sup>33</sup> This phenomenon raises questions about the methodological integrity used for dating Codex Alexandrinus and other uncial manuscripts.

<sup>34</sup> Any so-called “itacism” found within Codex Alexandrinus may hold in tension/conflict a blending of what is both seen and heard, as well as a distinction between what is written versus what is spoken, between γραφή and ῥημα.

<sup>35</sup> Codex Vaticanus picks up the surplus **Ε** and uses it as a red marker in the margin for this exact same episode (Mk.1:21-28). In Codex Sinaiticus the same surplus **Ε** is placed between the columns at Mk. 1:24. Its unfortunate, but as Dirk Jongkind notes, “any study of the ... apparatus of a given manuscript will suffer from a very serious drawback, which is that hardly any comparative data from other manuscripts [is] available,” and “I do not know of any systematic study of the variations within the Greek Eusebian apparatus apart from the study of Nestle and a single article by Nordenfalk”; *Scribal Habits of Codex Sinaiticus*, p. 100.

<sup>36</sup> The connection between the Paradise Narrative and the Gospel is mentioned in Rm 5:12-14, 1 Cor. 15:22, 45; 1 Tim 2:13-14; Jude 1:14. However, the idea of preaching a “dead

round the other way, he or she has the vocative root **ΥΕ**, meaning “Son.”<sup>37</sup>

#### 4.2. *Inclusio*: Mark 1:21-28 and Mark 14:53-72

At this point we must interrupt our trajectory of analysis in order to grasp more fully what lays before us. The assertion, “What is in us and you, **ΙΥ** Nazarene?” followed by, “We have known you, who you are, the holy *one* of **ΘΥ**”—these are meaningless statements, unless one asks, Who is speaking? And, How do “they” know who is **ΙΥ**, Nazarene? Only if one recognizes the parallels to this episode at Mark 14:53-72 can one gain answers to these

son,” which is the preaching of Paul (1 Cor. 1:23), comes about as a consequence of Adam assigning a *name* to the *γυνή*. In other words, by naming the *γυνή* Adam repeatedly fails to recognize her sacred status. There are three terms used to describe the *γυνή*, all of which are labels of what Adam sees or experiences: (a) **ΓΥΝΗ** “woman” (Gen. 2:23) who receives this name “because she was from Andros” (i.e., one of the Cyclades Islands in the Aegean Sea [see Herodotus, *The Histories*, Bk. 8, ch. 111, and Demosthenes, *Against Neaera*, Speech 59, §64]); (b) **ΖΩΗ** “life” (Gen. 3:20), though it is actually *a feature* of the *γυνή* that Adam names “life”; and (c) **ΕΥΑ** “good” (Gen. 4:1). On a certain level there is a lack of judgement in assigning a name to the *γυνή*, for in doing so Adam makes no distinction between her and the animals (Gen. 2:20), and even puts her on par with the *figurines* (Gen. 2:19b). For at Gen. 2:19-20 the vocabulary and syntax put the emphasis upon the act of *speaking*, and, more to the point, of speaking to *figurines*, which then leap off the page or suddenly come alive. At Gen. 2:19b the phrase “living soul” is almost exclusively used to describe paintings, figurines, or sculptures, and refers strictly to the *image* or *figure* of the object being observed (see “Ζωον,” in H. G. Liddell and R. Scott, *A Greek-English Lexicon*, p. 603). This being the case, what is actually named by Adam are shadows, outlines, or images of reality, but which are in fact *not* reality. In the paradise narrative these “images” exist as “living souls,” having the *form* of the thing represented but they lack the actual *likeness* or *substance* of reality. This is why, for example, Adam originally lacked a suitable helper (Gen. 2:20b). However, one must also keep in mind that the *γυνή* in the paradise narrative possesses more than one semantic range, and that the *γυνή* brought to Adam had been taken from the Isle of “Andros,” which may well be the male equivalent of Lesbos. If the latter be the case, then the “woman” brought to Adam was in fact a *man* with only the appearance of a woman (cf. 1 Tim. 2:14a). Even the name “Adam” has more than one meaning. To be sure, there are three distinct, yet interchangeable references used to describe the man: (a) **ΑΝΩΝ**, (b) **ΑΔΑΜ**, and (c) **ΑΝΔΡΙC**. In this last case, **ΑΝΔΡΙC** can refer (a) to a citizen of Andros and/or (b)—not to a man—but to the *image* of a man. See especially “Ἀνδρίας” in Liddell and Scott, *A Greek-English Lexicon*, p. 122. The lexical entry “Ἀνδρίς” in E. Hatch and H. A. Redpath’s, *A Concordance to the Septuagint and Other Greek Versions of the Old Testament* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1906), p. 86, is a bold attempt to provide a root entry that is consistent with Gen. 3:23. Still more, recall that **ΟΘC** moulds the **ΑΝΩΝ**. This “moulding” refers most definitely to a type of psychological programming which is a prerequisite to being placed in **ΕΔΕΜ**, and the naming at Gen. 2:18-20 a test of its efficacy. Lastly, one final point worth noting in this regard is that the Paradise of **ΕΔΕΜ**, though often translated “a garden” or “pleasure park,” is more precisely translated as “place of terror.” This latter meaning is much more consistent with the etymology of the word *παράδεισος* (i.e., *παρα* “beside” and *δεις* “terror”); see the verbal root “δειδω” in Liddell and Scott, *A Greek-English Lexicon*, p. 312.

questions. As noted above, this episode forms an *inclusio* with events recorded at Mark 14:53-72. The term “*inclusio*,” refers to “the repetition of words or phrases at the beginning or end of a unit of text, which create a bracketing effect.”<sup>38</sup> In this case, the *inclusio* spans a body of narrative that includes almost the entire book, occupying a penultimate position at either end of the Gospel. Once the limits of the *inclusio* are identified, the reader is invited to explore “the relationship between these bracketing statements and the intervening material in order to identify the semantic relationship with which [the] *inclusio* is used.”<sup>39</sup>

Simply put, *inclusio* is a type of narrative rhetoric; it “exemplifies a form of distant parallelism,” that “include[s] the use of synonymous or complementary element[s] rather than the same element.”<sup>40</sup> Long ago, Ibn Ezra (1093–1168 CE) wrote: “It is an elegance of style, and in particular a characteristic of the prophetic style, to repeat the same thought by means of synonymous words.”<sup>41</sup> Similarly, Robert Lowth described biblical parallelism as “the correspondence of one verse or line with another.”<sup>42</sup> He noted, “When a proposition is delivered, and a second is subjoined to it, or drawn under it, equivalent, or contrasted with it, in sense; or similar to it in the form of grammatical construction; these I call parallel lines, and the words or phrases, answering one to another in the corresponding lines, parallel terms.”<sup>43</sup> These types of parallelism, he argued, could be reduced to three sorts: synonymous

<sup>37</sup> The vocative root extracted from the text lacks the horizontal line written atop the letters. Another vocative form, however, **ΥΙΕ** (re)appears at Mk. 5:7 with four (4) dots placed above it. Much like the cancellation dots used by the Qumran and the Alexandrian scribes, Mk. 5:7 exemplifies the exact same characteristics. In the case of Mark 5:1-10, the codex even reflects the exact same setting and region as the Qumran community; see, Emanuel Tov, *Scribal Practices and Approaches Reflected in the Texts Found in the Judean Desert* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 2004), pp. 184, 205-08.

<sup>38</sup> David R. Bauer and Roberta A. Traina, “Inclusio,” in, *Inductive Bible Study: A Comprehensive Guide to the Practice of Hermeneutics* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2011). The ancient Greeks used terms such as ἀναστροφή, ἐπαναδίπλωσις, πολιλλογία, προσαπόδοσις, and even κύκλος to describe the literary features associated with *inclusio*; see especially, Richard Volkmann, *Rhetorik der Griechen und Römer in systematischer Übersicht* (Leipzig: Druck und Verlag von B. G. Teubner, 1885) p. 471; Heinrich Lausberg, *Handbuch der literarischen Rhetorik: Eine Grundlegung der Literaturwissenschaft*, 1 (München: Max Heuber, 1960), p. 317; George A. Kennedy, *New Testament Interpretation through Rhetorical Criticism* (Chapel Hill: University of North caroline Press, 1984), p. 34; J. Jackson and Martin Kessler, eds., *Rhetorical Criticism: Essays in Honour of James Muilenberg* (Pittsburgh: Pickwick Press, 1974), p. 24.

<sup>39</sup> D. R. Bauer and R. A. Traina, *Inductive Bible Study*.

<sup>40</sup> George H. Guthrie, *The Structure of Hebrews: A Text-Linguistic Analysis* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1994), p. 15.

<sup>41</sup> Quoted in George Buchanan Gray, *The Forms of Hebrew Poetry* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1915), p. 18.

<sup>42</sup> Robert Lowth, *De Sacra Poesi Hebraeorum Praelectiones Academicæ* (published 1753), quoted in G. B. Gray, *The Forms of Hebrew Poetry*, pp. 49.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 49-50.



parallelism, antithetic parallelism, and synthetic parallelism. In the last case (synthetic parallelism), he further proposed that the second parallel *adds something new and fresh* to the first parallel, further developing its thought. The result is the perfecting of both the form and the substance of what was originally communicated.<sup>44</sup> But more importantly, the rhetoric of *inclusio* is designed to guide a reader's interpretation of the text. By recognizing the parallels at Mk. 14:53-72 the reader can gain a greater understanding of the synagogue episode at Mark 1:21-28.

For the purposes of this paper, five primary parallels are identified between Mark 1:21-28 and Mark 14:53-72.<sup>45</sup>

#### 4.2.1. The First Parallel

##### A Mark 1:21

[**IC**] came into Capernaum, into the Sabbaths, and into *their* **Συναγωγή**, and began to teach.

##### A' Mark 14:53

And they led the **IN** to the High Priest, **Καίφα**, and all the chief priests, the scribes, and the elders came with him.

In the first parallelism, we see an antithesis being drawn between subject **IC** (mas. sing. nom.) and the object **IN** (mas. sing. acc.) In the first instance the subject (**IC**) is active, and comes into their synagogue; in the second instance the object (**IN**) is passive, and is brought with the chief priests, elders, and scribes to the **Καίφα**. Here the **Καίφα** functions as a form of metonymy that includes the chief priests, the elders and the scribes, and, most importantly, the **IN**. In other words, the **Καίφα** is a *label* used to describe a gathering that includes the **IN**. The **Καίφα** does not exist as a single *persona*, but rather only as a plurality, and only so long as the **IN** is present (Mk. 14:60, 61, 63). Similarly, the **Συναγωγή** functions as a form of synecdoche that includes the chief priests, the elders, the scribes, and the **IC**. Even though the chief priests, elders and scribes are not named in their synagogue at Mk. 1:21, the parallel with Mk. 14:53 fills in the lacuna, answering to the possessive pronoun “*their*” in the phrase, “*their* synagogue.” Simply put, if one asks, “Whose synagogue is *their* synagogue?” the answer is, “*Their* synagogue is the synagogue of the chief priests, the elders and the scribes” (cf. the “veil” at Mk. 14:65a) Recall, moreover, that **συναγωγή** literally means “to go together” as a group. Henceforth the **Συναγωγή** “*goes* together” with the **IC**, whereas the **Καίφα** does the opposite, it *comes* together with the **IN**.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid., pp. 18-19, 49-50.

<sup>45</sup> There are several other notable parallels within this *inclusio*, but the brevity of a paper forces limits on the extent and depth of analysis.

## 4.2.2. The Second Parallel

**B** Mark 1:22

The people were struck out of their minds (ἐξεπλησοντο) by his teaching, for he was teaching them as one having authority, not like the scribes.

**B'** Mark 14:61-65

The High Priest, rising in the middle, began asking the **ΙΝ**, “Do you have nothing to answer to these ones testifying against you?” But the **ΙC** was silent, and nothing was answered. Again, the High Priest began questioning him and saying to him, “You are the **ΧCΟΥC** of **ΘΥ**, the blessed!” The **ΙC** said, “I am! And you shall see the **ΥΝ** of **ΑΝΘΥ** sitting at the right of power and coming with the clouds of **ΟΥΝΟΥ**.” And the High Priest tore his robes saying, “Why yet do we have need of witnesses? You have heard the blasphemy! What is manifest to you?” And they all judged him to be worthy of death. Some began to spit at him, others blind-folded his face and then struck him with their fists (κολαφίζειν), and said “Prophesie! Who did it?”

Much like the first parallel, here in the second parallel, we see to our amazement the Καίαφαν questioning the **ΙΝ**, the object of the verb. There are three rounds of questioning: the crowd (14:55-59), chief-priest #1 (14:60), and the chief-priest #2 (14:61). The **ΙC** (mas. sing. nom.) remains silent precisely because all accusations and questioning are levelled against the **ΙΝ**, which is the object of the verb.<sup>46</sup> The only way for the **ΙΝ** to respond is through a) an infinitive construction, where the subject of the infinitive is placed in the accusative case, or b) by using the verb *to be*, where the subject and object are

<sup>46</sup> Cf. the teaching at Mark 3:23b “Πῶς δύναται Σατανὰς Σατανὰν ἐκβάλλειν;” where the subject of the infinitive takes the accusative case, and where the infinitive functions as the device for the ὄνομα ῥήματος. See Freidrich Blass, *A Grammar of New Testament Greek*, trans. H. J. Thackeray (London: Macmillan Co., 1898), pp. 241-42 and James H. Moulton, *A Grammar of New Testament Greek*, Vol 1 (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1906), p. 212.

placed in the nominative case—but even then the **ΙΝ** would remain unseen.<sup>47</sup> Knowing, however, that the *Καὶ ἄφαν*<sup>48</sup> incorporates *both* what is spoken/heard as well as what is seen/written, and knowing that questions focusing on a *singular* paradigm yield no response, the implied author intervenes in the story-world by employing *nomina sacra* in such a way that *visually* bring about a plural inflection in the accusative case, while at the same time parading a doubling in the nominative case. In so doing, the implied author tests what is seen/written against what is spoken/heard. The interjection of *nomina sacra* in the question/confession, “You are **ΟΧΘΟΥΣ**” purposely veils a) what exactly really was *spoken* by the High Priest, as well as b) what exactly really was *heard* by the **ΙΝ**. In other words, the reader does not know definitively what exactly the High priest asked and/or confessed. Neither does the reader know definitively what was understood by the **ΙΝ**. Much like the grammatical defiance in the question, “What is in **ΗΜΕΙΝ** and **ΕΥ**,” the interjection of *nomina sacra* in the phrase “You are the **ΟΧΘΟΥΣ**” is arresting, because it encourages the competent reader to play-out many possible scenarios, including the possibility that what is spoken by the High Priest is not a question but rather a confession.

In any event, following confession(?) at Mk. 14:62, and following the tearing of his garments, the High priest does not say to the chief priest, the elders, and the scribes, “You have *read* the blasphemy,” but rather he explicitly says “You have *heard* the blasphemy” (Mk. 14:64). Presumably this is because the High Priest cannot actually *see* the *subject* of the verb on earth. On the contrary, he and the others (the *Καὶ ἄφαν*) only ever *hear* a voice which is judged to be the subject of the verb. In a striking analogy to Plato's parable of the Cave, here the High Priest and his audience assign a voice to what was always only a shadow of the real, condemning what they *hear* all the while assigning guilt to the *object* of the verb.<sup>49</sup>

To be sure, the striking of the mind at Mk. 1:22 is paralleled by a striking of an unseen and veiled face at Mk. 14:65a. The immediacy of the judgement mentioned at Mk. 14:62 is instantly played out insofar no one actually sees whom they are striking, but by faith believe it to be the **ΙΣ**. To be sure, those striking the face boast of *their* veiled identity (see also “*their*” synagogue” at Mk. 1:23). They believe that their identities are concealed and thus seize the moment to exhaust their hatred upon face of the recipient. This parallel links inside with outside, the striking of the face with a striking of the

<sup>47</sup> W. W. Goodwin, *A Greek Grammar* (Boston: Ginn and Company, 1895), p. 199; Cf. Mk. 9:14-32.

<sup>48</sup> *Καὶ-ἄφαν* is the feminine plural accusative of ἀφή (from ἀπτω), meaning “the ligatures” or that which connects the γραμματα. See “ἀπτω” in Liddle and Scott, *A Greek-English Lexicon*, p. 200.

<sup>49</sup> This type of confusion comes about because of an inability to distinguish the world of the text from the world of the competent reader.

mind, yet not without a veiling of the one from the other.<sup>50</sup> These corresponding parallels suggest that at Mk. 1:22 those in the synagogue (a) believe that their true identities are concealed, and (b) are unaware that they are in fact being struck out of their minds by the teaching of the **IC**. Due to the linear aspect of reading, the implied reader only becomes aware of this metaphysical phenomenon when he or she makes the connection between the parallels.

#### 4.2.3. The Third Parallel

##### C Mark 1:23-24

Immediately there was **ANON** in their synagogue with **INI** unclean. And he cried out saying, ... We have known you, who you are..."

##### C' Mark 14:65b

The sailors, as well, greeted him with slaps (ῥάπισμασιν) to the face.

In this third parallel, the notion of disorder and of transgressing boundaries is brought to the extreme. In Mk. 1:24, the **ANON** who wields *nomina sacra* with **INI** unclean is paralleled with sailors (ὑπηρεται)<sup>51</sup> in the temple greeting the veiled one with slaps. Both are out of place, both are out of their proper settings. One might surmise, for example, if the cry of **ANON** should be placed somewhere in the Sanhedrin episode (Mk. 14:53-64), or perhaps the beating scene (Mk. 14:65; 15:16-20), or maybe during the Pilate act (Mk. 15:1-8), rather than at Mk. 1:23-24. Similarly, one might assume that the sailors would be more convincing if placed in anyone of the boat journeys (Mk. 4:1-2, 35-36, 5:1-2, 18, 21, 6:32-33, 34-35, 45-47, 53-56, 8:10, 13-14, 22), rather than

<sup>50</sup> One is inclined to ask, from whence did this veil emerge? There are several possibilities: The veil could have come from one side of the High Priest's garments, the other side being used to veil the synagogue at Mk. 1:21b. One could also surmise that the veil emerged as an item taken from one of the sailors props, e.g., a sail from one of the boats made into a veil. From a critical point of view, it seems to me that the Gospel narrative is here and elsewhere pointing to artifacts outside of itself. One may consider, for example, the carpet pages of the Leningrad Codex, including, for example, the Full Lunar Disk (p. 473), the Six Pointed Star (p. 474), and the Divided Rock (pp. 489-90) (*The Leningrad Codex: A Facsimile Edition*, ed., David Noel Freeman, *et. al.* [Leiden: Brill, 1998]). If one compares these pages with the Solar Disk, the Star Disk, and the Lunar Disk on the Babylonian Kudurru, there are significant similarities and differences (see "Babylonian Kudurru" at the British Museum: [www.britishmuseum.org](http://www.britishmuseum.org)). What is most intriguing is the cryptic manner in which these and other artifacts are signalled throughout the Gospel (and elsewhere); though, in a few instances these artifacts seem to be mentioned explicitly, e.g., Mark 13:24-27.

<sup>51</sup> Here the term sailors (ὑπηρεται) is a synonym for the disciples; see especially Mark 6:45-56.

at Mk. 14:65b. The facts are, however, both sets of actors are out of place and out of character. Yet these characters are placed exactly where the implied author desires them. Indeed, they are set in paradox for the reader.

As a character set the sailors are presented as disciples, their actions are those who obey, albeit not knowing who is the **IC** (see Mk. 4:41b: τίς ἄρα οὗτος ἐστὶν ὅτι καὶ ὁ ἄνεμος καὶ ἡ θάλασσα ὑπακούουσιν αὐτῷ). But at Mk. 14:65 the sailors, much like the unclean spirit at Mk. 1:24, are convinced that they know who is the **IC**. Therefore, the profane cry at Mk. 1:24 and the sailors at Mk. 14:65b parallel each other on account of their paradoxical attributes; both parallels help to interpret each other. Indeed, it is an intense form of synthetic parallelism. The sailors are unclean precisely because the boundaries of their character-set and their actions are in conflict (cf. also Mk. 9:25); but also because they claim to know the **IC** which, by default, implies an attempt to *name* the *nomen sacrum* and *define* the **IC**.<sup>52</sup> Similarly, “**ANON** with a **ΠΝΙ** unclean” is by default an unclean idea, since it is conveyed using *nomina sacra*. When the narrator provides the reader with the *content* of the cry, the narrator deliberately intensifies this notion of uncleanness.<sup>53</sup>

#### 4.2.4. The Fourth Parallel

**D** Mark 1:24a

And (he) cried out saying, “What is (this) in us and you, **IY**, Nazarene...”

**D'** Mark 14:67a

“You were with the Nazarene, **IY**.”

In this fourth parallel, we see a doubling of the **IY** as well as the label “Nazarene.” This is a clear case of synonymous parallelism. Subtle differences exist, however, between the parallels. First, there is the reversal of syntactical order from “**IY** Nazarene” to “Nazarene **IY**,” generating a brief moment of

<sup>52</sup> Cf. Col. 4:3b and 11a.

<sup>53</sup> At this point it's worth questioning if there is a conspiracy between the implied reader and the text. If so then one must also consider the construct of “an ideal narrative audience.” According to Peter Rabinowitz, an ideal narrative audience “is the audience which the narrator wishes he were writing that is distinct from the actual narrative audience. It is formed through collusion, insinuation, and conspiracy between the implied reader and the text; “Truth in Fiction,” *Critical Inquiry* (1974), p. 34. Cf. also the notion of an “ironic implied author,” where “[1]the content of the narrator's communication is not identical to its literal presentation and, [2] the recognition of the divergence between content and textual presentation appears designed to establish a rapport of understanding between a sender and a receiver at the expense of the narrator,” Wayne Booth, *A Rhetoric of Irony* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1974), pp. 10-11.

*chiasmus*.<sup>54</sup> Second, there is the change of case from the vocative Ναζαρηνε to the genitive Ναζαρηνου. The differences in case distinguish conceptually between the title or office (vocative case), which presumably anyone could assume and is clearly political in nature, and that of a *persona* of the Nazarene (genitive case), which specifically *limits* the meaning (cf. Ναζαραιος at Mk. 10:47a).<sup>55</sup> The subtle difference is confirmed in the exchange between the daughter of the High Priest and Peter. The daughter accuses Peter of being “one of them” (i.e., manifesting the *persona* of the Nazarene). Peter, of course, denies this, stating instead that he is not versed (ἐπιστεμαι) in the responsibilities of the office (Mk. 14:66-68). Put simply, there is the office/organization of the Nazarene (vocative), and there is the *persona* of the Nazarene (genitive). The two are linked to one another but they do not mean the same thing.

At this point the reader may speculate if Peter's denials of the Nazarene are genuine. If so the denials indicate that his presence at Mk. 14:54, 66-72 is merely personal in nature, and his loyalties not fully disclosed. It could be, for example, that if Peter's denials be judged sincere, then the history in the Gospel according to Mark is not uniform but broken up over an extended period—possibly spanning several generations or even an unknown period of time. Normally organizations develop out of a *persona* or iconic figure who establishes its founding principles (i.e., its *raison d'être*), which devotees subsequently pledge allegiance and preserve its traditions, not the other way round. But in this parallel, contrary to a linear history, the organization comes first, then the *persona*.

<sup>54</sup> “Chiasmus,” in Martin Gray, *A Dictionary of Literary Terms*, Second Edition (York, UK: Longman, 1992), p. 56.

<sup>55</sup> William W. Goodwin, *A Greek Grammar* (Boston: Ginn and Company, 1895), pp. 222, 229.

## 4.2.5. The Fifth Parallel

E Mark 1:28

A rumour (ἄκοη) went out into all the region of Galilee.

E' Mark 14:70b

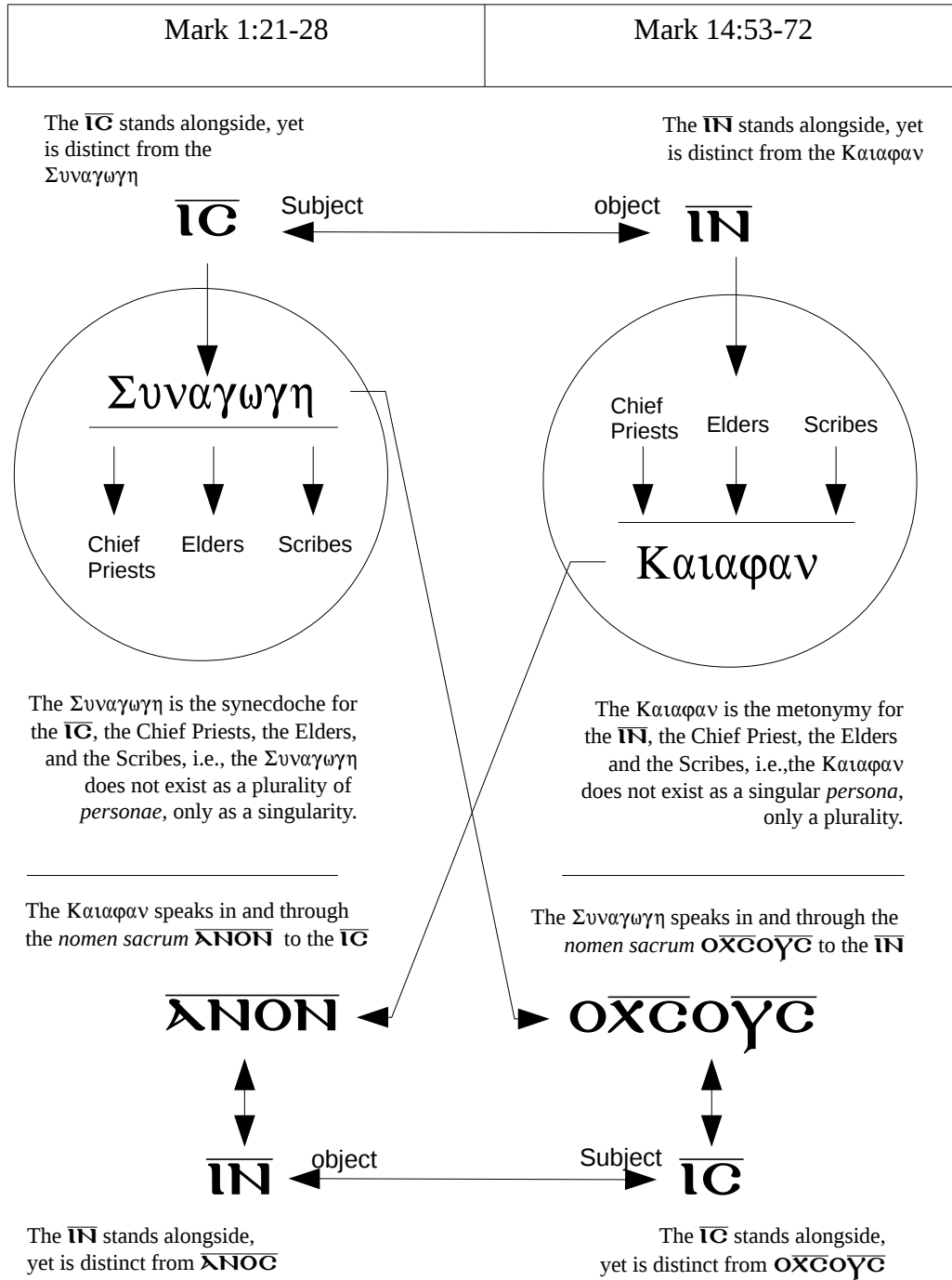
“Your gossip/chatter (λαλῖα) is Galilaïos.”

This last parallel is not synonymous but synthetic and concerns a communication circulating in Galilee and the Temple Cult in Jerusalem. Interestingly enough, the notion of a rumour or whisper (ἡ ἄκοη) places the emphasis upon hearing, while the latter (ἡ λαλῖα) emphasizes dialect of the rumour (i.e., Galilean).<sup>56</sup> At this extremity in the Gospel the rumour is not fully spoken but rather is a muted communication employing the apparatus of conspiracy and treason. To be sure, after **ΛΝΟΝ** with a **ΠΝΙ** unclean is silenced, those in the synagogue literally seek among themselves “who might be this new powerful teaching?” (τίς ἢ καινὴ αὐτὴ διδασκίαν) (Mk. 1:27). In other words, the **ΙC** who entered the synagogue and taught them with authority is paradoxically neither the *subject* of their teaching nor the *content*. If it were otherwise, the synagogue would not seek among themselves “who might be this new powerful teaching.” Here the synagogue turns in on itself. The narration implies that with the binding of the “profane cry” also came the banishment of the **ΙC**. Those in the synagogue seek, hereafter, for someone to fill the shoes, fit the bill, and play the role. Hence, the synagogue becomes by default Ναζαρηνε and begins to manifest the attributes and mythos of the Nazarene mentioned at Mk. 1:24 and Mk. 14:66-72. Again, this is confirmed by the daughter of the High Priest as well as those standing around Peter who speak of the same rumour mentioned at Mk. 1:24-28. And this rumour is one that includes conspiracy and treason, and circulates in Galilee and the temple cult in Jerusalem. When placed in parallel both ἄκοη and λαλῖα compliment and unpack each other, and help the reader to understand the larger narrative.

<sup>56</sup> The verb λαλεω does not necessarily refer to articulate speech, but can refer to a “fluttering of the wings,” or a “sounding,” or even some type inarticulate or broken communication.

4.3. Diagram of *Inclusio*

For the sake of clarity, we can now diagram all the features mentioned above.





## 5. CONCLUSIONS

### 5.1. Final Observations

In Codex Alexandrinus the Gospel According to Mark exhibits an intensely grammatical view of reality. The whole Gospel story depends upon this grammatical view of reality and cannot exist without it. In this way, the gospel speaks to the in-escapability of narrative. To be sure, it is not possible for anyone to narrate his or her own life story without the use of grammar and the *γραμματα*. The *Συναγωγή* episode at Mk. 1:21-28 and the *Καϊάφαν* episode at Mk. 14:53-72 document a symbiotic relationship between the reader and the those in the world of the text, between subject and object, between the founder and the organization. The *Συναγωγή* is the **ΟΧΛΟΥΣ** stunned by the **ΙC**, yet unable to acknowledge the **ΙC** as being anyone or anything other than themselves. They do not distinguish between themselves and the **ΙC**, who is the genesis of their own existence. For the *Συναγωγή* the **ΙC** can only be an on-going present-tense plural phenomenon which they define as themselves. They are unable to perceive the **ΙC** as a *persona* distinct from themselves, because they are a plurality. On the other hand, we see the *Καϊάφαν* as an organization dedicated to the memory of the **ΙΝ**, all the while unable to acknowledge the **ΙΝ** as a present-tense phenomenon. The organization of the *Καϊάφαν* chains itself to a past-tense event because it cannot perceive the **ΙΝ** in the nominative case. They only can accept the **ΙΝ** as being an accusative singular noun and thus and object which is in their power to define. Both the *Καϊάφαν* and the *Συναγωγή* are presented to the reader as extreme polarities. These polarities, moreover, come about on account of a tearing at both ends (Mk. 1:10; 14:63).

In both instances, however, there is an on-going upset; namely, the act of reading and writing. This is why both the *Συναγωγή* and the *Καϊάφαν* have their chief-priests, their elders, and their scribes. Each plays a role in the act of reading: the chief-priests are those who try to invert the reality of the **ΙC** and the **ΙΝ**, of subject and object, throwing up distorted renditions for the **ΙC** and the **ΙΝ** throughout Galilee and Jerusalem. Similarly the Elders and Scribes of both groups play their roles in reinforcing the distortions in an attempt to dethrone the reader, hoping instead to force a reversal between subject and object, and object and subject (e.g., **ΙΝ** and **ΙC**). Essentially, Mk. 1:1-28 and its parallel Mk. 14:53-72 reveal the dialectic between the many and the one, and the one and the many. In the former case, the those who claim to be the collective *persona*, are confronted by the one *persona*; and in the latter case, those who claim to be the organization of the one, are confronted by its founder. The impeding desire of both groups to define the **ΙC** and the **ΙΝ** respectively is manifest by the sacred profanity at both Mk. 1:24 and Mk. 14:61. Neither the *Συναγωγή* nor the *Καϊάφαν* acknowledge the grammatical inflections of the

other nor the grammatical rules governing subject and object. Each hopes for an anomaly in the rules of grammar, but this is an anomaly, ironically, which is outside of their own control, i.e., the *nomina sacra*.

From a narrative critical point of view, the competent reader is the voice of every character in the text, including the narrator. As the competent reader journeys through the gospel, he or she stands outside of himself or herself in a type of *ekstasis*. Because, to stand in the text (i.e., to adopt world view of the text and identify with a specific character set) means surrendering one's position as *subject* in the act of reading, and thus lose the *objective* point of view. On the other hand, to abandon any identification with the world of the text, essentially renders the act of reading a meaningless event. Much to the contrary, therefore, we suspend disbelief in order to allows the scripture "[to] impinge upon our consciousness as a totality, with sights, sounds, smells, tastes, and feelings...smuggled into us through those inked shapes, and released into our perception without having passed through our sensory organs in the normal way."<sup>57</sup> A competent reader must engage the scripture, for to do otherwise means veiling the *object* of perception, and hence to loose one's *critical* point of view. If both subject and object be respected, then the competent reader continually adds to his or her own intellectual portfolio, understanding of human nature, and the act of reading and writing.

## 5.2. Areas for Further Research

First, much more research can be done examining the relationship between Ancient Greek language and literature and the Bible. Though often unrecognized, all of ancient Greek language and literature—from the Homeric Epics down to the Orphic philosophers—informs every letter, and thus every word, on every page of the Bible. Much more research needs to be done exploring the relationship between the ancient Greek language and literature and the Bible.

Second, much more research needs to be done on the *nomina sacra* in uncial manuscripts. A systematic grammar of the forms and functions of *nomina sacra* as narrative devices is practically none-existent within scholarly literature. Much more research in this area needs to be done.

Third, if the above suggestions are received in good faith, then there are grounds for a re-evaluation of the dating of Codex Alexandrinus and other uncial codices as well, especially in light of their affinity to ancient Greek language and literature.

Forth, a systematic biblical theology that takes seriously the phenomenon described at Mk. 1:21-28 and Mk. 14:53-72 needs to be

<sup>57</sup> Robert Scholes and Robert Kellogg, *The Nature of Narrative* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1966), p. 275.

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developed. The aim of such a theology could be to develop ways and means in order to recognize and identify the phenomenon described in Mk. 1:21-28 and Mk. 14:53-72, and then develop a curriculum that instructs young readers within our society as to the perils of adopting such polarized points of view.

Fifth, much more research could be done investigating the relationship between the Gospel and the Paradise Narrative in Gen. 2:4-3:24 (and parallels). Once again, this is an area of research that is largely unexplored terrain within biblical studies.

Finally, connections between the Leningrad Codex, the Babylonian Kudurru, and Codex Alexandrinus (and other uncial manuscripts) could be explored at length. There are some very peculiar connections that are evident between and among these artifacts. Much more research could be done in this regard, including reviewing some of the 19<sup>th</sup> century research that was done in this field.